ARAMBE FLAME

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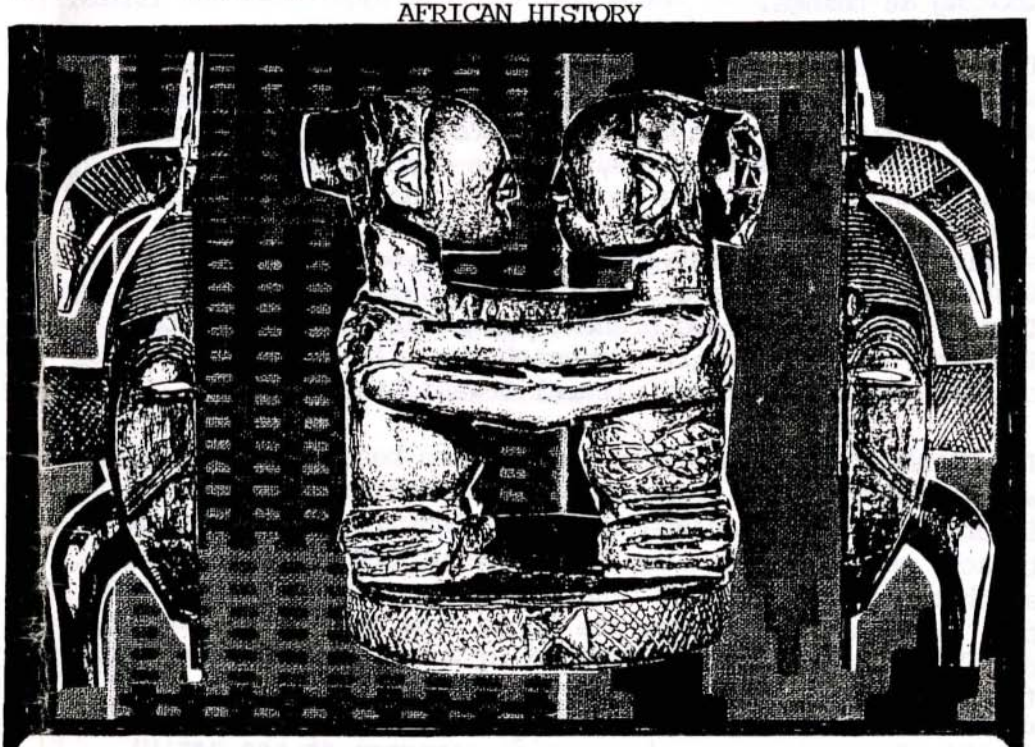
AFRICAN HISTORY



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EDITORIAL POLICY

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly newsletter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(Nebraska State Pen chapter). Ours is a pan-Africanist publication, meaning that we view all people of African descent as one African people, having certain basic interests in common. Also, the HARAMBEE FLAME attempts to be Africentric, in that, through study of the history, cultures, and traditional values of African people, we seek to have and cultivate an African way of looking at things.

The main purposes of the HARAMBEE FLAME are to stimulate and inform. We list "stimulate" first because, more than anything else, we want our readers to be moved to question their/your own ideas, lives, and the circumstances in which we live and to challenge those things that must be challenged in order for us to move from a condition of mental and spiritual servitude and physical dependence upon Caucasian institutions to a state of collective self-determination. Toward this purpose, we present commentaries, poems, etc. These do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization.

The HARAMBEE FLAME provides information because wise people want to know what's going on and because certain kinds of information can stimulate the mind, inspire people to want to act, and influence them to pursue proper understanding so that the actions they take will be as effective as possible. The main vehicle we use to provide information is our "From Other Sources" feature in which we make an effort to provide news about the problems we African people are confronted by and the steps we are taking to resolve them. In this feature, we try to provide coverage of the activities of African people and developments affecting us in the U.S., the nations of Africa, and elsewhere. In "Commentary," we offer analysis of and views about current events and developments.

We encourage you to send your comments, essays, poems, etc. to HARAMBEE FLAME; Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE.; 68542-2500.

BACK IN TIME

In observance of African History month, we present an expanded edition of our Back In Time section. We hope you will find this material, which focuses on "matters of the spirit," of interest and that you will be moved to do more study of the history, values, and traditions of our people, African people.

Sister in Kongo Appropriates Europeans' Christianity to "Reverse the Curse"

Kimpa Vita, as she was first called, was of noble birth, a Mukongo aristocrat, a 'priestess' of the cult of Marinda, used to the ways of power and the intrigues of the ruling elite...

As she later described it, it began when she was sick, dying, and St. Anthony appeared to her. There was nothing accidental about this choice of saint--St. Anthony was a Portuguese saint an especially revered by missionaries and settlers in Kongo and Ndongo. But this was no 'white' apparition for St. Anthony appeared to Dona Beatrice[Kimpa Vita] in the form of one of her brothers. In one person, the foreign religion was given an African personality. This is what Dona Beatrice wanted. Her aim was the restoration of the kingdom...

Like many mystics she renounced material things. She even imitated the death of Christ--her followers came to believe that she died on Friday, went to heaven to plead the cause of her people with God and was resurrected on Sunday. Her political message, that Kongo must be reborn, and the appeal of the religious imagery that surrounded it, was instantly adopted by most who heard her preach...By 1704 she was established in the capital[Sao Salvador], recognized as both a religious and political leader...

Her achievement was to create an African church with the traditional Bible stories as background: Kongo was the Holy Land; Christ had been born in Sao Salvador; the founders of Christianity were Africans. Most important, rather than copying the whites, as the manikongo and his

nobles had done, Dona Beatrice insisted on the basic difference of black people...The central part of her beliefs would be described today as 'negritude' or 'black consciousness', an awareness of the value of the African experience. There was a return to wearing the traditional bark-cloth garments instead of adaptations of European dress. The Christian message had originally been adopted in Kongo to give the power of Europe to the manikongo--which it manifestly had not done. Now Dona Beatrice took the message and reworked it to give power to the people...

The European missionaries named her faith Antonianism, after her saintly vision. Needless to say, they were utterly opposed to it...The Portuguese were determined to destroy her and when it came her fall was rapid. The authority of Manikongo Pedro IV had so declined that a rival group of nobles had set up their own manikongo in opposition. Pedro IV needed Portuguese support to maintain his weakened position and he was under great pressure from the missionaries to silence Dona Beatrice and suppress the Antonine movement...Wishing to re-enact a full Africanization of the Christian story she gave birth to a son, claiming that she remained a virgin. Despite the awe in which she was held, the story seems to have weakened her hold on her people's faith. Just after the birth, in the early months of 1706, Pedro had her arrested...His first idea was to send her to the bishop of Angola for trial, probably hoping she would escape on her way to Luanda. But the Capuchins wanted her dealt with publicly and they forced Pedro to have her tried by the royal council. She was sentenced to be burned at the stake.

Source: WOMEN LEADERS IN AFRICAN HISTORY by David Sweetman

Africans Enslaved in U.S. Establish Their Own Spaces and Means to be in Touch with Their Own Supreme Being

For the first two hundred years of slavery, mass conversion to Christianity did not occur. Some slave masters allowed the slaves to sit in the balcony of their white churches. A few others sent white preachers to preach the philosophy of submission to the will of the slave master. Most slaves

believed in their priests[traditional African priests], who later became preachers, who ministered to their needs. As the generations passed, the priest, at first, used the cover of preacher to continue practicing African religion or African spirit practices and beliefs. Each African felt the need to converse with God in the African way...

Lucretia Alexander, an ex-slave described the improvised, hidden African church on the plantation, called the "invisible institution." The invisible institution operated without the master's knowledge. During slavery, this invisible institution was known by the slaves as "hush harbors" because the slaves had to hold their worship in bushes or whispers, so the master couldn't hear it. Lucretia Alexander describes how the slaves "would have church in their dwelling houses," deep in the woods, near the river, any place away from the master's eyes and ears, "and they had to whisper."...

The most important reason for the hush harbors was so the slave could directly experience the "spirit." The African priest interpreted the will of the spirit, and used his spirit powers to protect, comfort, and avenge the slave. The hush harbor was the place where the spirit was democratized, and everyone could visit with the "holy ghost."

Source: THE INTEGRATION TRAP: THE GENERATION GAP by Oba T'Shaka

The Circle Makes Its Way Across the Water

Among the Bakongo in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, during the burial ceremony, the bodies would sometimes lie in state in an open yard, on a textile-decorated bier. Bare-chested mourners would dance to the rhythm of drums in a broken counterclockwise circle, their feet imprinting a circle on the earth, while a cloth attached to and trailing on the ground from each dancer's waist deepened the circle. Following the direction of the sun in the southern hemisphere, the mourners move around the body of the deceased in a counterclockwise direction. If the deceased lived a good life, death, viewed as a mere crossing over the threshold of another

world, was a precondition for the soul's return to the world of the living through the deceased descendants. The movement of the sun, the circle, and its counterclockwise direction symbolized Congo spiritual continuity and rebirth.

Wherever in Africa the counterclockwise dance ceremony was performed, it is called the ring-shout in North America. Dancing and singing were directed to the ancestors and gods. The tempo and revolution of the circle would quicken during the course of the movement, sanctioning togetherness and commitment. As the tempo of the ring quickened, possession by ancestral spirits often took place...The ceremony was devoted to the ancestral spirits and to reciprocity between the living and the dead. It cemented the place of the elders in the life of the slave and conveyed a sense of abiding commitment to the ceremony on the part of the children, who emulated their elders by kindling a fire and dancing around it at night. Replicated in the slave community, the ring shout could continue for up to five hours with singing swelling on and on in great waves of emotions, giving rise to possession and speaking in tongues. Entering the ring was a means of renewing the most hallowed of values of African people, of expressing them through song and dance...

Source: AFRICAN AMERICAN JAZZ AND RAP: Social and Philosophical Examinations of Black Expressive Behavior, edited by James L. Conyers, Jr.

As African men, we commit ourselves to respecting ourselves and each other; to respecting African women; and to respecting our children and youth, and giving them proper guidance.

FROM OTHER SOURCES

Ndaba IV Held in Harriet Tubman City

"A group of several hundred organizers and activists from as far away as Los Angeles, California and as close as down the street gathered in Harriet Tubman City(Baltimore), Maryland, for the fourth Conference on Reparations. Ndaba IV('Big Sit Down' in the Zulu language) was held during the morning and afternoon of Saturday, October 30, 2004 at Morgan State University, and a Mass Gathering followed that evening at the Prince Hall Grand Lodge.

"Organized locally by Morgan State University Professor Raymond Winbush and presided over by the Chairman of the Chicago, Illinois- based National Black United Front, Dr. Conrad Worrill, Ndaba carried the energy forward from the previous Ndaba held earlier this year in Houston, Texas...

"At the morning session,...Minister Farrakhan's opening remarks spoke of the contributions each of the participants brought to the day's efforts...He exhorted the assembled activists to take heart and to continue the struggle, recognizing the White Supremacist base of the leadership of the US regardless of the man or political party in control of the White House...

"The participants divided themselves into eight Working Groups...each of the Working Groups made a presentation to the general body in an afternoon Plenary Session...

Faith Working Group--"The Working Group, facilitated by Rev. Reggie Williams, offered a number of 'faith-based' strategies, including national days of fasting and of 'holding our dollars back' from the consumer-oriented system; interfaith speakers bureaus featuring Muslim Imams, Christian Ministers and Afrikan Traditional Spiritual Leaders to speak about reparations;...reparations organizing models for local faith communities to use and control locally;...redefinition of holidays from an Afrikan spiritual perspective; and pursuit of the House Resolution to study the need for reparations(HR40).

Legislative Working Group--"The facilitators of this Working Group were Kendrick Bellamy and Somari Grace. Some

of the legislative strategies discussed included adding precision to the language of HR40;...community grassroots organizing; identification of local grassroots candidates who will campaign around the issue of reparations...preparations for Reparations Awareness Day on Feb. 25;...

Organizational Collaboration Working Group--Thomas Muhammad facilitated this Working Group. Among the plans discussed were a Black Buying Blackout, with no participation in the mainstream consumer economy on the two shopping days of December 11 and 18, 2004;...supporting N'COBRA's Buy Black on Black Fridays campaign;...supporting the upcoming 7th Annual Land Loss Summit in Tillery, North Carolina from February 18-20, 2005;...

Ayare-Sa Working Group--"'Ayare-sa' was coined by the group's co-facilitator, Dr. Marimba Ani,...to define an Afrikan-centered concept of healing. She and Lamont Muhammad presented their group's findings...Some specific recommendations included a cleansing ceremony to be incorporated into orhganizations to 'get rid of the disease processes'...'to correct our lack of love and trust for each other';...organizing Healing Places and Male-Female Relationship Healing Groups for ourselves and our organizations;...establishing a Database of Healers;...

Youth Working Group--Bro. Salim facilitated this Working Group. Some recommendations included...the creation of a Reparations Kit for Youth, to include a reading list of books for young people, including information on the definition and history of reparations and a description of key lawsuits;...

Education Working Group--"Sshem Saa and Hannibal Afrik were the moderators...They began by stressing the need to capture the hearts and minds of the students in the schools, colleges and universities about reparations. They also spoke about the perils of quasi-independent Afrikan-centered schools whose existence depends on licenses and accreditation from mainstream political organizations that can withdraw them almost at a whim... This Working Group is undertaking the establishment of Study Groups in our organizations, churches and public schools, complete with a core curriculum and the promotion

of books that 'can help open up our minds'..."

Legal Strategies Working Group--"Attorney Lionel Jean-Baptiste moderated this Working Group and made its presentation. One point that was made early is that as much mass education as possible must be done. The purpose of the litigation against government entities and private companies was as much to confront the system and put the information out so the masses would be informed about their legal rights and about how to bring their own lawsuits if necessary."...

Research and Scholarship Working Group--"Dr. Raymond Winbush of Morgan State University and Barbara Young of N'COBRA-New York facilitated this Working Group and made its presentation. They made a number of recommendations, such as establishing a Web site for the NDABA RESEARCH GROUP;...creation of an Institute for Reparations and Information Strategies, based on the Reparations Petition; establishment of a...means to accept financial contributions to help fund the research;...and attempts to persuade prominent talk show hosts such as Oprah Winfrey to produce a show about Callie House and the Reparations Movement."

Criminal Injustice Working Group--"Minister Abdullah Muhammad was the...facilitator and made [the] presentation. ...the following decisions were announced: embracing the Jericho Statement on Political Prisoners, Prisoners of War and Political Exiles...; writing to political prisoners and prisoners of war;...transitional pre-release and post-release programs to provide job training, health care and drug treatment to recently-released prisoners;...and building for the 10th anniversary of the Million Man March, scheduled for October 16, 2005..."

-from "Reparations Revisited: Report from NDABA IV, pages 1 and 14-16, Dec. KUUMBA Report(Baltimore, MD.)

Gang Intervention and Prevention Program and Hip Hop Artists and Producers Join Forces in Newark to Put Brakes on Violence

"Five months after signing a historic ceasefire agreement, some principal parties involved have teamed up again to

form an organization to help spread the message about the treaty.

"Along with Dr. Bill Cosby, Newark Deputy Mayor Ras Baraka, S.O.S.(Saving Our Selves), a gang intervention and prevention program, and hip hop artists and producers, 'HIP HOP FOR THE P.E.O.P.L.E.'(Providing Education Opportunity, Prosperity and Life Eternally) hopes the enormous influence hip hop has on everyday life will...quell the rising tide of violence in Newark and cities around the country.

"At a recent press conference, the group outlined its objectives, which include advancing proper education and family values, preventing killings among youths, and exposing the truth of gangs--why, when and how they began and how the media has provied an outlet to perpetuate violence and gang lifestyle...From the beginning, Mr. Cosby has offered financial support and guidance to the group...

"Organizers say early next year the group plans to release a CD featuring local artists showcasing thier talents with music and spoken word. There will also be political commentary and gang members talking about their situation. Also on the CD will be some well-known hip hop artists, including Treach from Naughty by Nature fame, Joe Budden, Rah Digga and Jaheim...

"Listeners should not expect to find stereotypical hip hop on this CD, says Mr. Baraka. 'Hip hop music is being sent to our kids' homes and used to destroy our community', he insisted. 'We want to use it to rebuild our community'..."

-from "New Hip Hop Movement Aims to Bring Peace to Streets in Newark," page 3, Jan. 4 THE FINAL CALL (Chicago, IL.)

As in U.S., Africans in Central and South America Facing Injustice and Organizing for Change

..."While much attention has been properly given to the struggle of 40 million or so Blacks in the United States,

...little attention is paid to the plight of Brazil's Black population of 80 million, the largest anywhere outside the African continent, and second only to Nigeria in one single country.

"Race is an all-important factor in gross inequality throughout Latin America and the Caribbean...the Indigenous population throughout Latin America and the Caribbean is only 10 percent. The African-descended population, on the other hand, 'is in the 30, 40 percent range and we have very poor data, so it could actually be higher than that', she[Jacqueline Mazza, an expert about African Descendant issues at the Inter American Development Bank] continued.

"'So what we're talking about is race playing a central figure in the high levels of inequality in Latin America. In almost all cases, the African descendants are among the poorest of the poor'. The IDB, said Ms. Mazza, has just begun to study the links of race as a factor in education and labor markets.

"'We generally feel it is extremely significant, because the numbers that we do have show African descendants at the lower levels of quality of education. That is, that Black children in Latin America are usually schooled in the lower quality schools. Not so unlike what you might incur in the United States'...

"Beginning in the early 1990s, Blacks started organizing themselves in Latin America. By the time of the UN World Conference Against Racism in September 2001, the African-descendant movement had gained political traction throughout Latin America.

"In December 2000, there was a regional, preparatory conference in Santiago, Chile, according to Claire Nelson from the Social Development Division of IDB. 'That was the first time Latin American governments were openly admitting that there was an issue of race and racism in their countries', she said...'there has recently been formed a caucus of Black elected officials. I believe they've had two meetings, one in Brazil and one in Colombia'.

Colombia is where the first Latin American organization, modeled after the U.S. Congressional Black Caucus, was formed. Ironically, the Afro-Latino racial equality movement has spread back to the U.S., according to IDB experts. The U.S. Latino civil rights organization 'La Raza' has created its own Afro-Latino contingent...

...the organization of the Black legislators in Latin America and the Caribbean...is planning its next meeting scheduled for March 2005 in Costa Rica.

'There, they're beginning again to try and parallel or gain support from Black legislators here in the United States. The lack of political voice obviously goes with the economic and social development issues'...

The broad, Afro-Latino non-governmental organizations are going to meet again in a June preparatory meeting, and Brazil will host a major conference in December 2005..."

-from "Afro-Latinos: Discovering Identity, Organizing"; page 36, Jan. 11 THE FINAL CALL

Little Press Coverage of Tsunami's Assault Against East African Coast Leads to Less than Adequate Aid

"Western nations and private donors have responded with an unprecedented outpouring of aid to tsunami devasted Asian countries. Yet, according to BlackNews.com, the five East African nations hit hard by the tsunami have not received that same attention or support...

"Official estimates put the death toll in Somalia alone at 300, with thousands more injured and more than 50,000 homes destroyed. But, the Philadelphia Daily News reports, Mohamed Basal, an environmental health and safety specialist, learned from his uncle in Hafun that 11,000 to 18,000 Somalis may have been killed by the Tsunami...He said that waves estimated to be travelling as fast as 800 mph hit the coast, heaving sand dunes 25 feet high onto village houses.

"Hafun, in northeast Somalia, was the country's most damaged village. Out of about 4,500 residents, 300-400 people were killed. About 80 percent of the homes, roads and other buildings were destroyed. The fishermen who survived no longer have boats. The giant waves smashed their boats and swept their nets, refrigerators and everything they need to earn a living and feed their village out to sea.

"UNHCR(The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) has issued an urgent 'flash appeal' for $13 million to help 54,000 Somalis left homeless by the tsunami...

"Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally has joined Earl Ofari Hutchinson, Los Angeles Urban Policy Roundtable president and BlackNews.com columnist, and other Black community activists in Southern California to help raise funds for Somalia and four other African nations hard hit by the tsunami...

"The activists want to make people aware that aid is needed to assist tsunami victims in Africa. They refer interested people, churches and organizations to the website of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, www.unhcr.ch...

"Not waiting for help from outside of Africa was Mozambique, one of the world's poorest nations, which donated $100,000 to tsunami victims immediately after the disaster. Having survived catastrophic floods four years ago, Mozambiquans understand the need for immediate aid..."

-from "Black Activists Raise Funds for African Tsunami Victims," pages 1 and 4, Jan. 19 SAN FRANCISCO BAY VIEW(San Francisco, CA.)

African Union Expresses Willingness to Restore Democracy in Haiti

"The African Union's chairman has called the Caribbean island of Haiti 'an African country outside Africa' and said the Union is ready and willing to help restore democracy there, after the president was deposed last year.

"Chairman Alpha Oumar Konare said that 'The AU wants to help create conditions in which a new government can be democratically elected in Haiti'.

"He added, 'We want to create a framework for non-violent national dialogue and a situation where none of the political forces are excluded'.

"Konare, who visited Haiti in December, made the announcements after meeting in South Africa with that country's President Thabo Mbeki and ousted Haitian President Jean Bertrand Aristide, who has now settled there..."

-from "African Union Offers to Help Aristide," page 2A, Jan. 27-Feb. 2 JACKSON ADVOCATE(Jackson, MS.)

Government of Zimbabwe Responds to Condoleeza Rice's Characterization of Zimbabwe as an "Outpost of Tyranny"

'Condoleeza Rice's confirmation hearing last week by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee concerning the Iraq war was fierce at times, but it was her listing of Zimbabwe as an 'outpost of tyranny' that created the real firestorm.

'Rice...stated that Burma, North Korea, Cuba, Iran, Belarus and Zimbabwe were countries 'where the United States will stand behind the people for freedom and Democracy'...

'Stan Mudenge, Zimbabwe's minister of foreign affairs, reacted swiftly. 'There is no need for Dr. Rice to pander to the nauseating, nonsensical whims of the largely racist anti-Zimbabwe clique in the United States Senate', he said.

'Zimbabwe's state-run newspaper, The Herald, also blasted Rice. 'She is a Black woman who will be manly and White in her relentless assault on Blacks, their liberties and their remnant and dwindling sovereignties. She will be a Black who washes away the sins of White power as it bludgeons non-White states'...

'Mugabe, elected in 1980, is the only president Zimbabwe has ever had. This has fostered movements within the country to remove him...

"Mugabe claims efforts to oust him come from White landowners in the country who want to rule the country again and make its Black citizens serfs. The United States, Britain and other European powers have put Zimbabwe on their human rights watch lists.

"Zimbabwe's leaders say that the Bush administration has little interest in their country or sub-Saharan Africa and maintains that Rice would continue the U.S.'s lack of concern...

"Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., asked Rice about the Bush administration's concern for some countries and lack of regard for others. Obama cited the civil war and genocide in the Sudan as an example, noting that the administration has given little attention to the conflict. 'It is very difficult to have a specific definition of when you use force and when you do not', Rice explained. Rice did not talk about Africa and its problems during her hearing and was not asked about the continent except for Obama's inquiry..."

-from "Rice 'Washes Away the Sins of White Power,'" pages 1 and 11, Feb. 2 SAN FRANCISCO BAY VIEW(San Francisco, CA.)

COMMUNITY NEWS

Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization Kwanzaa Observance

We held our annual Kwanzaa program this past 28th. of December at--you guessed it--the state prison in Lincoln. The event was called to order by our Eso/Alakoso Asha, Les Wagner, who also functioned as master of ceremonies. Following the pouring of libation by Bankole; the recitation of our creed and pledge, which were led by Gah-is; and welcoming remarks, each of stood in the circle and introduced ourselves to the group. Mondo delivered an explanation of Kwanzaa. This was followed by the presentation of the Kwanzaa symbols, candle-lighting ceremony, which was presided over by Amifika, and an offering of food to the ancestor shrine. Then we shared small pieces of fruit and wholegrain bread for our

'partaking in the harvest."

The second portion of our program began with a talk by Kafele, "What Is Ujima," in which he explored the meaning and implications of collective work and responsibility, as this third of the Kwanzaa principles applies to African people. Afterwards, we had enthusiastic discussion on the various issues that had been raised.

The third part of the program, "cultural performances," consisted of readings of their original poems by Bankole and Lisabet, a sister who is a student at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and was here as a representative of the African American Organization there. In addition to these poetry readings, Mondo read "A Kwanzaa Tale," a symbolic story he'd written on the power of the Kwanzaa principles, and Kafele performed an original rap, entitled, 'I Aint Gonna Holler and Scream," in which he called upon all of us to assist him in delivering his rap's refrain, 'I aint gonna holler and scream'. His strongly Africentric and political rap, with the group participation, got the activities bldg. sounding like a church of what Omowale (Malcolm X) might call, "that old-time religion."

We spent our last half hour or so eating fresh fruits, pastries from the prison store, talking, and listening to an assortment of music from the African continent.

Our Kwanzaa Observance is one of four special programs we have each year. By "special" we mean meetings at which we are allowed to have at least 35 guests from the outside, purchase pastries or other food, take photos, and have an additional hour for our meeting. The other three are our African History Program in February, our Annual Awards Program in June or July, and our Fall Symposium in September or October. If you have any questions about our organization, meetings, whatever, we encourage you to call us at (402) 479-3379 or write to: Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE. 68542-2500.

BOOKS

THE INTEGRATION TRAP: THE GENERATION GAP

This book is the most recent by the educator and community organizer, Oba T'Shaka. His previous books are: THE ART OF LEADERSHIP(Volumes I and II), THE POLITICAL LEGACY OF MALCOLM X, and RETURN TO THE AFRICAN MOTHER PRINCIPLE OF MALE AND FEMALE EQUALITY(Volume I). THE INTEGRATION TRAP: THE GENERATION GAP is published by Brother T'Shaka's Pan African Publishers. It consists of 431 pages, which are inclusive of 7 chapters, plus acknowledgements, introduction, appendix, notes, bibliography, and index. The chapters are: Choosing African and African American Culture to Bridge the Generation Gap; Formative African History: Twa Hunter-Gatherer Societies: The Foundation for Ancient African and World Civilizations; King-less and Queen-less Agrarian Democracies; The Twa or Anu: Founders of Pre-dynastic Kemet(Egypt); The Anu: Creators of Asian and American Civilization; African American Culture: A Culture, Not a Sub-culture; Applying African and African American Culture to Organizing Today.

In chapter 1, Oba elaborates on what he sees as "The Central Problem." To quote the Brother:

> "The state of African American communities today is one where we see either the destruction or erosion of extended family communities in many northern communities and a greater weakening of the Black nuclear family between 1968 and now, than between 1619 and 1968. The erosion of the extended family community and the weakening of the Black nuclear family have been caused by powerful, hostile, and sophisticated external forces that have hit the Black community since 1968. These forces, combined with the negative psychological effects of slavery(the inferiority complex) and the attraction to American materialistic or bling-bling culture have produced 'A Choice Between Two Cultures', where many African Americans are moving away from our rich African American culture for a destructive Euro-American culture."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The HBCU Network has partnered with Just Like Me, Inc. to create the Save Our Future Campaign. The campaign is designed to promote black history and positive images to black children by offering prizes ranging from gift cards to tickets to the second annual HBCU Alumni Getaway Cruise to cash prizes up to $10,000. The Save Our Future Campaign is focused on the promotion of two publications -the Just Like Me Series and the Princess Briana book. The Just Like Me Series consists of three coloring textbooks teaching the origins of scientific discoveries and inventions created by black people from Ancient Africa to present day America. Princess Briana is a 72-page fairytale designed to combat the negative messages from the media regarding the need for flawless skin, good hair, a specific skin color, and a certain weight to be considered beautiful. For more information on the Save Our Future campaign, visit www.hbcunetwork.com/saveourfuture.

The Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture at the University of Chicago will host the first national conference on the topic of "Feminism and Hip Hop" on April 7-9. This conference will provide a forum where scholars, students, artists, activists, community members and members of the media can gather to discuss and analyze the relevance of feminist agendas to the hip hop generation. This conference is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is required online at http://csrpc.uchicago.edu. The deadline for registration is March 18. For more information about the conference, contact the Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture at 773-702-8063.

There will be a State of Black Education Social Forum, Oct. 6-10, 2005 at Rutgers Univ. There will be a series of day-long institutes where educators and activists can showcase successful practices in which they are currently engaged and help develop plans of actions which participants can take back to their communities. The Institutes can take the form of theme-based workshops, lectures, actual study groups, classes. We are currently inviting proposals for the institutes. The deadline for receipt of proposals is March 30. For additional information, email us at: sobe2005@africamail.com

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Africans are beautiful in our own right, rather than at the expense of any other group of people. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

NGUZO SABA

Umoja - Unity
Kujichagulia - Self-determination
Ujima - Collective Work and Responsibility
Ujamaa - Cooperative Economics
Nia - Purpose
Kuumba - Creativity
Imani - Faith

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Alaga(Chairman - Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa

Eso/Alakoso Asha(Sgt.-at-Arms/Chairman of Cultural Affairs Committee) - Les Wagner

Olotu Eko(Education Chairman) - Yusuf Jahi Kafele

Eleto(Administrative Chairman) - "Red" Kirtley

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HARAMBEE FLAME EDITOR

Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa